

**City of Columbus**  
**Regular Planning Commission Meeting**  
**October 18, 2017**

The October 18, 2017 regular meeting of the Planning Commission for the City of Columbus was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Garth Sternberg at the City Hall. Present were Commission members: James Watson, Jesse Preiner, and Jody Krebs; City Administrator Elizabeth Mursko; Planner Dean Johnson; and Recording Secretary Karen Boland.

Also in attendance were City Councilmember Bill Krebs; Haila Maize, Janet Hegland, Marge Roisum, Vern Roisum, Tom Olson, Gennie Olson, Barb Bobick, Don Santanni, Anton Paul, Rick Graybill, George Schwalbe, Pat BJORKE and Dan LaCoursiere, Kim Tong, Kathy Joyce, Michael C., and Norma Heuer.

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

*Motion* by Krebs to approve the Agenda as presented. Second by Preiner. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL – SANCTUARY AT HOWARD LAKE PRELIMINARY PLAT & CUP/PUD REQUEST PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 4, 2017**

*Motion* by Krebs to approve the minutes from the Sanctuary at Howard Lake preliminary plat and CUP/PUD request Public Hearing held on October 4, 2017 as written. Second by Preiner. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL – 6939 135<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE CUP AMENDMENT AND VARIANCE REQUEST PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 4, 2017**

*Motion* by Preiner to approve the minutes from the 6939 135<sup>th</sup> Ave. CUP amendment and variance request Public Hearing held on October 4, 2017 as written. Second by Krebs. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL – REGULAR PC MEETING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 4, 2017**

*Motion* by Krebs to approve the minutes of the October 4, 2017 regular Planning Commission meeting as written. Second by Preiner. Motion carried.

**DISCUSSION – 2018 COMP PLAN**

Haila Maize gave a presentation on the current status of the Comp Plan. Draft chapters are being worked on for land use, housing, parks, and transportation. Land use refers to future development. Housing refers to whether there is a way to include some affordable housing in the city. Parks refers to any planned expansions and connections to regional systems. And transportation is looking at current issues and the City's future priorities. In order to move forward on the Future Land Use Map, some key land issues need to be addressed.

- **Growth forecasts** from the Metropolitan Council show that projected population growth from 2016 through 2040 is an increase of 1630 people. Number of households are expected to increase by 775 in that time, and employment is expected to grow by approximately 430 new jobs. Residential growth, then, is expected to be more substantial than job growth. The Met Council is mandated by State law to determine where growth is and whether systems are in place to support that growth.

- There was discussion of the **Broadway Avenue MUSA extension**. Forest Lake has sewer service; it doesn't extend into Columbus. It potentially could, but would require a major trunk-line expansion for a substantial cost. That discussion will be ongoing, but if it is to be considered viable for this Comp Plan, that needs to be determined soon.  
**PC members agree that discussion of extension of the Broadway Avenue MUSA will not be expedited for inclusion in the new Comp Plan.**
- A **request for rezoning on a specific parcel of land at the Centennial Church site** was discussed. It is now zoned Public/Institutional, which does not allow churches. The request is to rezone to Rural Residential. The church is now considered legal non-conforming. They are interested in expanding their sanctuary.  
**PC members agree with the re-designation to RR for this property.**
- The **Freeway Corridor** was the main focus for tonight's land-use discussion. It offers an opportunity for more substantial growth in the City. This is the time to revisit the amount of land/category and determine if it is the proper mix going forward.
  - For the CR district at the northern end of the freeway, staff recommends reducing retail and replacing it with other uses (the 2015 McCombs study showed an excess of retail in the City), redirecting the NW corner of the interchange to Suburban Residential and removing the Suburban Residential Overlay district to make it strictly Suburban Residential (developers are sometimes less likely to building in an overlay district because the flexibility creates too many unknowns for the future), and limiting retail development elsewhere in the City.
  - Consider allowing mixed-use development in the CR district. Mixed use is a combination of residential with retail and services. It could be mixed by building or by site. E.g. A building with first floor retail and residential on floors above.

Johnson emphasized there are two major ways for the City to meet the housing forecast in this plan. First is the removal of the overlay district and making that a straight Suburban Residential district. If that type of general direction is approved of by the PC, staff would gather and provide information on densities and how many units could be included. In the Plan the City will need to address averaging density to certain standards, demonstrate where housing will be with public utilities, and what densities will be to meet that. After the Comp Plan is completed, work on the zoning language can begin to meet those plans. Right now in the SR Overlay the maximum density is three units per acre. The City may want to establish a second level for higher density. It is possible to have one SR district and define more than one use for it. A hierarchy of uses could be created that abut each other and are compatible with other uses. Eliminating the SR Overlay would address both the issue of meeting projected housing needs and reducing excess retail property. A density ceiling would be referenced in the plan, for instance, "up to 20 units/acre." Johnson stated that in any area of the City where we are recommending a land-use change, residents of that district will be sent notice directly, so they can offer input. The Comp Plan would give a general description of any changes in land use, and the City would later spend time making the specific zoning decisions and changes.

**PC members agreed they are willing to establish an outright residential area somewhere in the Freeway corridor.**

Johnson pointed out the City is to have 58 affordable housing units, and they must be higher density. The Comp Plan must illustrate how the City is, at least, going to remove barriers for a developer to come in for affordable housing and high-density housing.

- Consider whether the SE portion of the interchange is appropriate for LI (Light Industrial). And consider whether some CR areas should be re-designated as LI, which allows CS (Commercial Showroom) uses. Revisit the allowed uses and regulations in the LI district relative to traffic generation, outside storage, and other impacts.
- Planner Johnson said there has been no push or suggestion by the CC for **commercial or industrial expansion in other areas of the City** at this time: Kettle River, Lake Drive, or Broadway. If there were considerations in these areas for that type of expansion for the purposes of inclusion in the upcoming Comp Plan, we would need to hold neighborhood meetings in those areas as soon as possible.
- The **next step** is to revise the Future Land Use map based on the PC's decisions, and to schedule public open houses in January or February to get input from citizens on the City's priorities for growth and improvements. After incorporating that input, a full draft will be completed in early spring for review by neighboring communities over a six-month period.

At the next PC Comp Plan meeting, the Planner will bring photos of what 20 units/acre looks like, and Google Earth views of the specific areas. PC members will receive as much information, in advance, as possible about Comp Plan questions and issues to be discussed.

## **PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

No topic was raised at Public Open Forum.

## **CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Mursko reported several citizens have come to the City office to vote. The Forest Lake School District has ballot questions up for a vote on Tuesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. There are no City elections, and the City has not been designated to have in-person absentee ballots for this vote.

The CC cancelled its last meeting in December (12/27). Because there would be such a long gap between the December 20<sup>th</sup> PC meeting and the first CC meeting in 2018, Mursko does not recommend applications be heard at that last PC meeting. She asked if PC members would like to cancel their 12/20 meeting. PC members would like to hold their meeting on December 20<sup>th</sup>. It will be for the purpose of Comp Plan discussion only.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS' REPORT**

### **KREBS COMMENT:**

Krebs thanked Haila for her presentation.

## **ATTENDANCE - NEXT CC MEETING**

Wolowski was scheduled to attend the City Council meeting on October 25, 2017. Due to her absence tonight, Sternberg will attend in her place.

*Motion* by Krebs to adjourn. Second by Preiner. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Karen Boland, Recording Secretary